

The Deciduous Forest

The Deciduous Biome is also called the Temperate Forest Biome, it is very close to the Taiga Biome. Deciduous means 'tend to fall off' which refers to the tree leaves. Tree leaves are usually broad and fall off seasonally. This biome is found in the mid latitude areas. The Deciduous Forest gets the second largest amount of rainfall, second to the Tropical Rainforest biome.

Location: The Deciduous Forests are found in the Eastern half of North America and the middle of Europe.

Weather: Average rainfall is about 75-150 cm. or 30 to 60 in. Summers are mild in temperature and average about 21°C or 70°F, however, the winter temperatures will often be well below freezing.

Seasons: The Deciduous Forest biome experiences four changing seasons, spring, summer, fall, and winter. In the fall the leaves will change color and as fall changes to winter, trees will shed their leaves.

Animals: Animals in the Deciduous Forests are able adapt to the changing weather patterns of each season. They need to survive the cold winters and the hot summers. Some animals will hibernate and some will migrate during the cold winter months. Those animals who don't hibernate or migrate have special adaptations to survive both weather and winter predators. Animals will develop a warm winter coat, and lose it as the summer approaches. Many of the animals are camouflaged to look like the ground which protects them from predators. Black bears, wolves and coyotes are very common in the Deciduous Forest. The Deciduous Forest is also home to many insects, spiders, slugs, frogs, turtles, salamanders, snakes and many types of birds.

Plants: The soil is very rich in this biome. Trees in the Deciduous Forest biome include maple, elm, oak, and cedar and most of these will shed their leaves. The Deciduous trees adapt remarkably to the seasonal changes by changing color in the fall, losing their leaves in or by winter, sprouting new leaf buds in the spring and grow full leaves in the summer. There are also many shrubs and mosses that grow on the forest floor which doesn't get a lot of sunlight, making it ideal for these types of plants.